

# **Formal and Functional Approaches to the Study of Language**

Prof. Dr. Holger Diessel

Veranstaltungsart: Hauptseminar  
Zeit: Mo 16:15 – 17:45  
Raum: CZ3 SR 131  
Sprechstunde: Mi. 14:00  
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The seminar is concerned with the two major approaches to the study of grammar: The formal approach, in which linguistic structures are independent of their functions and meanings; and the functional approach, in which linguistic structures are motivated by functional and cognitive forces. The first part of the course provides an introduction to formal theories of grammar. In particular, we will consider the basic principles of generative grammar and its major developments since Chomsky's early writings. The second part of the course is concerned with various functional-cognitive approaches to the study grammar, notably with construction grammar, and considers the basic differences between the two approaches.

## **Requirements**

Short report  
Homework assignments (about 3)  
Term paper

## **Readings**

Some of the readings can be downloaded from the internet. For all other papers there are master copies in front of my office.

Course materials can be downloaded from the internet through the 'Digitale Bibliothek Thüringen' (Link on homepage of university library). Search for 'Formal-functional Linguistics'.

## Course schedule

1. Introduction
2. Generative Grammar 1  
Phrase Structures  
c-command  
binding theory  
Chomsky 1957: 13-24  
Radford 1988: 1-27  
Radford 1988: 109-132
3. Generative Grammar 2  
Phrase structures and transformations  
Radford 1988: 27-49  
Harlow 1994: 4650-4655
4. Generative Grammar 3  
Transformations and island constraints  
[Radford 1988: 401-446]
5. Generative Grammar 4  
Generative semantics and the restructuring of the model  
Harlow 1994: 4655-4664
6. Generative Grammar 5  
Move alpha, X-bar theory, subadjacency  
Sells 1985: 19-31, 42-47  
Cann 1994: 5065-5070
7. Construction Grammar 1  
From idioms to constructions  
Croft 2003: chap 9
8. Construction Grammar 2  
Syntactic constructions as prototypes  
Networks of grammatical constructions  
Taylor 1998  
Diessel 1997
9. Construction Grammar 3  
The resultative construction  
The usage-based approach to CG  
Goldberg & Jackendoff 2004  
Diessel 2004: chap 2
10. The Usage-based Model 1  
Grammaticalization  
Frequency effects  
Bybee 2003  
Bybee and Thompson 1997
11. The Usage-based Model 2  
Processing  
Competing Motivations  
Hawkins 1998  
Diessel 2005
12. The usage-based Model 3  
Language acquisition  
Dabrowska 2000  
Diessel & Tomasello 2000
13. The usage-based Model 4  
Connectionsim  
Bates and Elman 2002

## Course readings

- Bates, E.A. and Elman, J. 2002. Connectionism and the study of change. In M. Johnson (ed.), *Brain Development and Cognition: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.  
(<http://crl.ucsd.edu/~elman/>)
- Bybee, J. 2003. Cognitive processes in grammaticalization. In M. Tomasello (ed.), *The New Psychology of Language*, Vol. II, 177-202. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.  
(<http://www.unm.edu/~jbybee/>) Articles
- Bybee, J. and Thompson, S. 1997. Three frequency effects in syntax. *Berkeley Linguistics Society* 23: 327-388.
- Cann, R. 1994. X-Bar Syntax. *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, 4650-4664. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Chomsky, N. 1957. *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Croft, W. (2003) From idioms to constructions. In William Croft and Alan Cruse (eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics*, chap 9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dabrowska, E. 2000. From formula to schema: The acquisition of English questions. *Cognitive Linguistics* 11: 83-102.  
([http://www.degruyter.de/journals/cogling/cl11\\_1\\_2.html](http://www.degruyter.de/journals/cogling/cl11_1_2.html)) UniBibl. On-Line Journals
- Diessel, H. 1997. Verb-first constructions in German. In Marjolijn Verspoor, Lee Kee Dong, and Eve Sweetser (eds.), *Lexical and Syntactical Constructions and the Construction of Meaning*, 51-68. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Diessel, H. & Tomasello, M. 2000. The development of relative clauses in spontaneous child speech. *Cognitive Linguistics* 11: 131-151.  
(<http://www.holger-diessel.de/>) Publications
- Diessel, H. 2004. *The Acquisition of Complex Sentences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
(<http://www.holger-diessel.de/>) Research > here
- Diessel, H. 2005. Competing motivations for the ordering of main and adverbial clauses. *Linguistics* 43: 449-470. (<http://www.holger-diessel.de/>) Publications.
- Goldberg, A. and Jackendoff, J. 2004. The English resultative construction. *Language* 80: 532-568.  
(<http://people.brandeis.edu/~jackendo/>) Recent and forthcoming papers
- Harlow, S.J. 1994. Transformational Grammar: Evolution. *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, 4650-4664. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Hawkins, J. 1998. Some issues in a performance theory of word order. In A. Siewierska (ed.) (1998), *Constituent Order in the Languages of Europe*, 729-780. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Radford, A. 1988. *Transformational Grammar*. A first course. Cambridge: CUP.
- Sells, P. 1985. *Lectures on Contemporary Syntactic Theories*. Stanford: CSLI.
- Taylor, J.R. 1998. Syntactic constructions as prototype categories. In M. Tomasello (ed.), *The New Psychology of Language*, Vol. I 177-202. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

## **Short reports**

Generative grammar 1

Generative Grammar 2

Generative Grammar 3

Generative Grammar 4

Generative Grammar 5

Construction Grammar 1

Construction Grammar 2

- a. Syntactic constructions as prototypes
- b. Networks of grammatical constructions

Construction Grammar 3

- a. The resultative construction
- b. The usage-based approach to construction grammar

The Usage-based Model 1

- a. Grammaticalization
- b. Frequency effects

The Usage-based Model 2

- a. Processing
- b. Competing motivations

The Usage-based model 3

- a. The acquisition of questions
- b. Learning vs. growth